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can a father bring up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord the children whom he has turned out of his house? In answer to the claim that a converted polygamist may be recognized as a Christian but not admitted to the church where his presence would occasion offense, it is held that if he is a Christian he cannot justly be denied baptism and church membership. Thus the lesser wrong must for a time be tolerated to avoid greater wrong.

A scriptural argument for the baptism of polygamous Christians is found in 1 Tim. 3 : 2, which is interpreted: A bishop must not be a man who is living with more than one wife. From the emphasis put upon this qualification for the bishopric is inferred the possible presence in the churches under Timothy's charge of men who were not in the sense intended husbands each of one wife.

Objections to the position of the paper are considered, as that the testimony of the church against polygamy will be neutralized, and that there is danger, if this practice be permitted, of the growth in India of communities of polygamous Christians. Appeal is made finally to the one scriptural condition of church membership, as set forth in the Presbyterian standards, viz., a credible profession of faith and loyalty to Jesus Christ. To this simple and plain condition not one iota must be added from any consideration of supposed prudence and care for the purity of the church.

The surprising approach to unanimity¹ among Christian residents in India, missionaries and laymen, in the positions of this paper is very significant in contrast with the equally unanimous contrary opinion at home. The argument from the legal validity of polygamous marriages in India is strongly put. Churches accustomed to legislate against the use of intoxicating liquors or indulgence in certain amusements by the imposition of pledges as a condition of membership will hardly admit the force of the appeal to the single scriptural condition upon which the argument in the main rests. The scriptural argument from 1 Tim. 3 : 2 based upon a disputed interpretation of a single text is a precarious one.

CHICAGO, ILL.

A. K. PARKER.

THE RELIGIOUS LIFE: ITS NATURE AND CLAIMS. By JAMES H. FAIRCHILD, D.D.; *Bibliotheca Sacra*, January 1897, pp. 21-37.

THE religious man is one who calls the religious elements of his nature into activity. We are born with a religious nature; we are

¹ See the *Missionary Review of the World* for February 1897, p. 109, where five missionaries of Japan and ten of China give cogent reasons against receiving polygamists into the churches.
G. A.

responsible for its proper exercise; and its proper exercise brings us into conformity with duty. He who makes it his habitual aim to do his duty is accepted by God, even if he knows nothing of God, and when he dies will be received into heaven. It is not affirmed that any ever turn to duty without some conscious reference to God; but the possibility of doing so is maintained. When one turns to duty, he finds himself so weak and so greatly in need of aid to keep his high purpose that he instinctively calls on God in prayer. But the essence of conversion is the turning to duty, and if the man subsequently turns to God, this does not constitute a new moral attitude. He who is truly striving to perform his duty is truly religious. Thus the religious life is strictly natural. The drift of the human soul is not toward sin. If a man is unworthy, he is so not because Adam fell, but because he is untrue to his own higher self. The claims of the religious life grow out of its nature; he who does not lead it fails in duty, is recreant to himself, and becomes subject to his own contempt.

This article states an interesting half-truth and pushes it to an extreme which neither the Bible nor Christian experience justifies.

It presents a low view of sin in its statement that it is not natural to sin. It suggests a definition of sin which will not bear inspection. For a man to sin, it tells us, is "to count himself a brute and to live by mere animal instinct and impulse." But sin exists in full control in men who no longer feel the power of animal instincts and impulses. The aged, who have lost all appetite and passion and ambition, are often completely alienated from God, self-centered, self-willed, and contented with their condition. Those who explain the existence of sin in the human heart by referring it to mere animal passions as yet unsubdued should account for its continued reign after these passions have decayed and disappeared. They should account, still further, for the fact that a much larger percentage of young persons, in whom these passions are strong, begin the religious life than of the aged, in whom they are no longer found.

Presenting a shallow view of sin, the article is consistent in presenting also an inadequate view of regeneration. Or rather, it entirely omits regeneration as an act of the Holy Spirit. The change from the unreligious life to the religious is chiefly the act of man himself. Repentance is repentance toward duty, and not toward God, except as God happens to stand in the same direction with duty. But little place, if any, is found for Christ as a savior from sin. The obligation to turn from sin to duty is an obligation which man owes to himself, and is associated but slightly with the fact that God is his Creator, Benefactor, and Redeemer.

This gospel, which exalts the natural and sees but little of the supernatural, can never win men in general to a life of duty. Men are converted when they are brought into contact with God in Christ, when they recognize the awful character of sin as a revolt against infinite love and holiness, and when they seek power to conquer it from the Being whom it has offended. They have already a sufficient confidence in the natural, and it is of the supernatural that they need to think.